

Are Communism AND THE Human Society Inevitable

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Published by

The Committee for the Preservation of the Jews

381 VAN SICKLEN AVENUE, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

S.P.D.

1940
EWS

Are Communism and the Human Society Inevitable?

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Harry Eaton

1. In one of his dramas, Euripides tells us that, after the Greeks had destroyed Troy, Neptune came out from the ocean to see what of the city which he and Apollo had built. He saw the city in ruins, the ground covered with the dead bodies of the slain warriors, the dead body of King Priam lying unburied, the sacred temple groves empty, the sanctuaries red with blood, and the treasures of Troy flowing to the ships of the Greeks. He saw a painful spectacle of desolation and death. As I look upon Soviet Russia I see such painful spectacle of desolation and death. The Russian soil will ruin endure so long as the earth endures, the Russian people will occupy this soil for a long time to come, but the Soviet Russia of the Russian revolution is in ruins, the Russian revolution is dead, betrayed and disgraced, the sacred groves empty, the sanctuaries red with blood, and the treasures of Soviet Russia flowing to the coffers of the enemies. With the death of the Russian revolution also died the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, and with the fall of Soviet Russia also fell the stronghold of the working class. A great historic achievement ended tragically, and a heroic chapter ended as a farce. And now the historic sphinx propounds the riddle: what is next? If we fail to solve the riddle, we shall perish. But how can we solve the riddle? What can we learn from the past, and what can we expect from the future? If the Russian revolution failed, what will succeed? If Soviet Russia fell, what will stand? If the leaders of the Russian revolution betrayed, who can be trusted? With profound knowledge and understanding the engineers planned the revolution, master-builders directed the construction of Soviet Russia, and with great sacrifice heroes built it; and yet, all is now in ruins. Why did this great historic achievement fail? Was it because it rested upon a false foundation, upon a deceiving hope? Was it because communism is an illusion and the human society will never come? If the great engineers were deceived, what assurance that we shall not be deceived? Scepticism stalks about and destroys all faith, all trust, all hope. Scepticism begets indifference, and indifference is the mother of chaos and darkness. If we look to the past, we are discouraged; if we look to the future, we are frightened. We cannot go back, we cannot remain where we are, and there is no incentive to work and struggle. Shall we resign ourselves to blind fate and accept passively all that comes to pass? If we do this, we shall degenerate and perish; but, in the face of the failure of the Russian revolution, all activity is paralyzed. We are in a dilemma: we cannot resign to blind fate, and yet we cannot assert ourselves. That are we to do?

2. Under the circumstances, it would be wisdom to examine the Russian revolution, to find out the reason why it failed, and then avoid the errors of our predecessors. But this, too, was done by our predecessors, and yet it did not save them and their work. The Russian revolution was bound up with the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, and this revolutionary movement rested upon Marxism, and Marxism was the outcome of a most profound and thorough investigation of all past history. What more can we find in past history which the builders of Marxism had not already found? All past history was nothing else than a record of failures. Marxism was conceived in the conviction that it would succeed, yet in the end it also failed. Can the past failures be a foundation for future success? Then we reflect on all this a question presents itself to us. How

could our predecessors work, struggle and build, in spite of all past failures? Reflecting on this question, we perceive that it was life itself that made them work, struggle and build, and they had no choice in the matter. We then also perceive that, as in the case of our predecessors, life will make us work, struggle and build, for we have no choice in the matter. Are we irrational brutes that must submit to the blind urge of life? Philosophers persuaded themselves and tried to persuade others that man should overcome the blind urge of life with reason. In the end, these philosophers reached the conclusion that "man hath no profit of all his labor wherewith he laboreth under the sun." Thus philosophy comes into conflict with life itself. In such conflict, how can we decide, shall we listen to philosophy and resign, or shall we obey the urge of life, work, struggle and build anew? In a conflict between philosophy and life, we must side with life, and this is the dictate of reason. Men are wiser in their conduct than they are in their philosophy; for, while through their philosophy speaks their immature mind, through their conduct speaks life itself. The human mind is still immature, and so is human philosophy; it sees and judges things only on the surface; but life itself is at the centre and knows what it does. When we reflect on past history through philosophy, history presents itself as an endless succession of failures and bitter disappointments. We then see a painful spectacle: races, nations and peoples come upon the historic stage, they strive, they struggle, they build and achieve, only to disappear from the historic stage, and all their works and achievements ending in ruin. But, when we reflect on past history through life itself, an entirely different story unfolds itself before us. What does life tell us?

3. This is what life tells us. Emerging from an unknown and indistinct background of chaos, darkness and ignorance; commencing at the zero point in experience and knowledge, without articulate speech, without the use of fire, without tools, without outside help, with bare hands and weak bodies, mankind fought their great battles; first, for mere existence; then for more of the means of existence; and, finally for a human existence. They brought light into darkness, order into chaos, knowledge into ignorance, power into helplessness, and laid the foundation for a wonderful world. They brought out and perfected human speech, they cleared the earth's surface, they tamed and harnessed animals, and appropriated for their use the whole earth. They discovered the use of fire, invented and perfected tools, first of flint, then of bronze, and finally of iron; and by means of these tools they utilized the treasures of nature to increase their food, clothing and shelter. They acquired a knowledge of horticulture and agriculture, they learned to spin, weave and sew, to build enduring and comfortable dwellings, to make pottery and other household things for ornament and use, and attained to an esthetic appreciation of beauty in architecture, sculpture, painting, music and language, and laid the foundation for an enlightened religion, a universal philosophy, and an exact science. Such was the achievement of mankind until now. Races, nations and peoples came and passed out, but mankind continued and will endure to the end of days, and will continue to rise ever higher and higher, until they will attain to their predetermined destiny. Races, nations, people and individuals failed, but mankind never failed. What to immature philosophy appear

as failures were only steps and stages in a continuous process of achievements and success. Since there were no failures in the past, there will be no failures in the future; the ever-increasing accumulation of experience, knowledge and understanding will make future success ever more assured. Let us consider two historic events, the French revolution and the Russian revolution, both of which apparently failed.

4. The French revolution took place in a small country with a population less than twenty million; but the Russian revolution took place in a country covering one-sixth of the earth's surface with a population nearly two hundred million. In the French revolution, the revolutionaries had no philosophy to guide them and no precedent to warn them; but in the Russian revolution, the revolutionaries had Marxism to guide them and the French revolution to warn them. In the French revolution, the masses had not yet attained to class-consciousness, and there was no revolutionary international proletariat to help them; but in the Russian revolution, the masses were already class conscious, and there was a revolutionary international proletariat to help them. The French revolution was essentially a political revolution, while the Russian revolution was essentially an economic revolution. The French revolution prepared the ground for the Russian revolution; the former made the latter possible. Without the French revolution, either the Russian revolution would have been impossible, or it would have been a petty bourgeois revolution. The French revolution made it possible for the proletariat to carry through successfully a proletarian revolution. Thus we see that the French revolution did not fail. And what was true of the French revolution will be equally true of the Russian revolution. The Russian revolution will make possible still greater and more successful revolutions in the future. Spinoza tells us that evil is only inadequate knowledge. Because of inadequate knowledge, what comes to pass seems to us to be evil. But, when we attain to adequate knowledge, then evil ceases to be evil; it turns into the very condition to good.

5. Why has philosophy taken a pessimistic view of history? This was due to the immaturity of philosophy, the immaturity of the human mind. The human mind has not reached the centre of progress. The centre of human progress is time-consciousness. The immaturity of philosophy shows itself right here. Philosophy declares that time is not a reality, it is only an abstraction of the mind. At this occasion I shall not repeat what I demonstrated elsewhere; but this much ought to be clear: whatever time is, all realities exist in time, and all processes take time. All else may be relative, but time is absolute. I take an acorn and put it into the ground. To become an oak tree, a number of years must pass; and there is no power in existence that can over night convert the acorn into a mature oak tree. Likewise, a human being takes twenty-thirty years to become mature; and no power in existence can convert the newly born baby into a mature person in one day. This is true universally. The same is true of mankind. Between the appearance of man on the earth's surface and the realization by mankind of their destiny, a long time must pass. But, while the philosophers know very well that over night the acorn cannot become an oak tree, and the newly born baby

cannot in one day become a mature person, they have not learned yet that mankind cannot realize their destiny as fast as the philosophers weave out their philosophies. If the facts of existence do not agree with philosophy, the philosophers tell us: so much the worse for the facts; and, if history does not move as fast as their imaginations, the philosophers declare: history is a failure. Hence, philosophers see only failures; but life pays no attention to the philosophers. Not philosophy determines life, but life determines philosophy; men do not live by philosophy, but they act according to the determination of life. Once we attain to time-consciousness and we fully realize that every process in existence must take time, then we see no longer failures, for life is not a failure. Thus we disposed of the conflict between life and philosophy. But there is another conflict which we must settle, and that is a conflict in life itself.

6. Long ago men of thought perceived the ultimate destiny of mankind; they called that destiny, the kingdom of heaven - a kingdom of light, reason, knowledge, understanding, peace and happiness. This was a perception, not of philosophy, but of life itself. But concerning this kingdom of heaven there was a conflict in the mind of men. The Jewish prophets saw that the kingdom of heaven will come only in the end of days, meaning, the end of the time fixed for the preparation of mankind for the kingdom of heaven. But Jesus came and declared: the kingdom of heaven is near at hand and men can enter it at once by an act of faith. This difference of view gave rise to a conflict between the Jews and the followers of Jesus. Which view is the correct one? Before I answer this question, let us consider the practical effect of these views. If I state that communism will not be realized before two thousand years from now, I paralyze all activity. If, indeed, communism will not come before two thousand years from now, why should we exert ourselves, work and struggle for the realization of communism? On the other hand, if I state that communism is near at hand and we can realize it even in our own lifetime, I inspire activity; we then have all the reasons to work and struggle to realize communism. Clearly, then, the view of Jesus is rational and correct; yet, what does history tell us? For nearly two thousand years the Christians believed that the kingdom of heaven is near at hand, and that by an act of faith we can enter into it; and yet, though nearly two thousand years passed, the Christians have not entered into the kingdom of heaven, and are not nearer to it than they were two thousand years ago. What was the consequence? At first, the Christians verily believed that the kingdom of heaven was near at hand, and expected every day the second coming of Christ; but, after they became tired waiting every day for the kingdom of heaven, they freed themselves from the agonizing disappointments by sublimating the kingdom of heaven and transferring it to heaven to be enjoyed after death. Originally, the kingdom of heaven was to be established on the earth, and to be enjoyed while we live; but now it was removed to heaven, and to be enjoyed after death. Since the kingdom of heaven belongs to heaven and will be enjoyed after death, then there is no reason why we should struggle to improve the earthly conditions of life. Thus Christians lived only to die, and their sole concern was the hereafter. It is not necessary to recount a most painful chapter of history. Christianity thus became reac-

nary, paralyzed all activity and stopped all progress. Contrast this with Judaism. Judaism declared, the kingdom of heaven will come only in the end of days, yet the Jews were and remained the most active, the most progressive and the most revolutionary people on earth. Always the first in the struggle, and always foremost in the struggle for light, knowledge, freedom, justice, peace and happiness on this earth - this was and is the history of the Jews. Here we see a most remarkable historic paradox. Judaism, which declares the kingdom of heaven will come only in the end of days, inspired activity; while Christianity, which declared the kingdom of heaven is near at hand, paralyzed activity? How can this be explained?

7. The answer is: there is no paradox here; both views were and are correct, only they were addressed to two different categories of men. Judaism spoke to the mature Jews, while Christianity spoke to the children of history, the immature and backward races. An infant cannot live by the philosophy and morality of the mature person. To understand what is involved in this profound problem, I shall begin with an illustration. Five-year old Johnny is sent to school. Little Johnny does not know why he goes to school, and he does not know how long he will have to go to school. If little Johnny were told that he would have to go to school for fifteen-twenty years, he would not understand what it meant, for how could five-year old Johnny form a conception of fifteen-twenty years? And, if perchance he did understand this, he would not want to go to school. Think of it, for fifteen-twenty years to go to school! To spend the best and happiest years in school, and be deprived of the opportunities to play and enjoy life? But little Johnny is not told anything. He goes to school, because papa and mamma want him to go to school, and because other children go to school. He goes to school, there he meets other children, he plays with them, sings with them, and together with them he learns a word here and a word there. And, if he behaves well, he gets from the teacher a star and from the mother a kiss and from the father a penny. Little Johnny does not believe in waiting for payment: he wants to be paid on the spot. And, to encourage little Johnny to be a good boy and learn what he is taught, dear mother promises him that he would become the President of the United States. Little Johnny does not know what it means to be president of the United States; but, since mother promises this as a reward for his good behavior, it must be something good. And nothing else will be good enough for little Johnny. And thus little Johnny continues to go to school for a year, for ten years, for twenty years. Now he is a mature person. Only now he begins to realize that all that he has learned until now was only a preparation for the real work of his life; only now he perceives that to the end of his life he will have to continue to learn. But now he is mature enough to realize the following. First, that it was well for him that, when yet a child, he did not know that he would have to study all his lifetime; it was well that parents and teachers deceived him with false promises; secondly, he now perceives that, while he will have to study all his lifetime, while he studies and prepares himself for something higher, he is already rewarded and already enjoys the fruit of his labor. This will prepare us to understand what is involved in the apparently conflicting views about the kingdom of heaven.

8. The kingdom of heaven is not somewhere removed from us by time and space and which, the moment we reach it, we can enter and fully enjoy; but the kingdom of heaven is about us and within us, and was always about us and within us; it always existed, it existed even before man appeared on the face of the earth; for the kingdom of heaven is the destiny of mankind, it is an eternal idea of God which realizes the purpose of God. The kingdom of heaven cannot be fully enjoyed the moment we enter it, but it must be conquered step by step. All past human progress and achievements were steps and stages of the kingdom of heaven conquered by mankind, and each step or stage conquered brought its own and immediate reward. But the complete conquest of the kingdom of heaven and its full enjoyment will come only in the end of days, in the end of the time determined by God. Thus we see that the Jewish prophets and Jesus were both correct, only they addressed themselves to different categories of men. The Jewish prophets spoke to the mature Jews, while Jesus spoke to the children of history. The Jews could work and struggle to conquer ever more of the kingdom of heaven with the full knowledge that a long time must yet pass before the task will be completed; but the children of history had to be told that the kingdom of heaven was near at hand. What was true of the early Christians was equally true of the modern proletariat. The proletariat is the last of the children of history summoned to conquer the kingdom of heaven. They had to be told that communism was near at hand, and that they could enjoy it even in their lifetime. But since the Russian revolution failed to realize communism, the proletariat is confronted with the same danger that confronted the Christians. Either the proletariat will learn the truth about communism, and will, like the Jews, continue to struggle; or, like the Christians, they will sublimate the idea of communism, transfer it to heaven, to be enjoyed after death. To save the proletariat from this fate, we come to the fore and tell them: the kingdom of heaven is near at hand, and as you proceed with your struggle you will be rewarded even in your lifetime, but you will not conquer it altogether and fully enjoy it until a long time to come. Not all proletarians are mature enough to understand this language, and to these we speak.

9. I spoke of the kingdom of heaven, which has lost its meaning. Therefore I must speak of communism and the human society. What proof is there that communism and the human society are inevitable? The term inevitable overwhelms the mind. Think of it: to say that communism and the human society are inevitable implies that we have an absolute knowledge of the future. Do we have such knowledge of the future? Are we not utopians and visionaries to believe that communism and the human society are inevitable? We shall presently see that we are neither utopians nor visionaries, and that we are absolutely certain that communism and the human society are inevitable. True enough, if the earth be destroyed, or if the human race be destroyed, communism and the human society will not be realized; but, if neither the earth nor the human race will be destroyed, then communism and the human society are inevitable. How can this be proved? This can easily be proved; all we have to do is to understand communism and the human society to see that they are inevitable. Let us therefore consider communism and the human society.

10. What is communism? Communism is a society in which every member has an absolute and inalienable property right, in common with the other members of society, to the earth and all means of life, so that each member is free to contribute to society as much as he can, and to receive from society as much as he needs. Communism is the foundation of society, the basis of all human progress, the hope of the working class, and the destiny of mankind. Religion, morality, philosophy, science, art, industry, commerce, culture and civilization - all are communistic in origin, nature and use. For thousands of years the human race struggled to acquire knowledge, understanding and skill. With infinite thought they crystallized the truths of religion, morality, philosophy, science, art and culture; with infinite labor they brought out tools, invented machines, discovered processes, and laid the foundation for a wonderful system of production. All these infinite values and treasures they bequeathed to posterity to be used by all in common. No matter whom, where and by whom an idea was crystallized, a truth discovered, a tool perfected a machine invented, or a process worked out, it is the common property of the human race, and each man is free to use it. Each idea truth, invention or discovery grows out of and depends upon the infinite material and spiritual values and treasures which mankind produced in common, and which they possess and use in common. Destroy all that is communistic in origin, nature and use, and human society will become impossible, and mankind will degenerate and disappear. Communism is the hope of the working class; only in communism will the working class be completely emancipated from exploitation, oppression and degradation and become free. Communism is the destiny of mankind. The inherent historic tendency of all social evolution is towards communism. This tendency manifests itself in the mode of production which tends to become ever more communistic, and in the ever increasing social institutions that become ever more communistic. The public schools, the libraries, museums, parks, and similar institutions are examples of communistic institutions. A poor man may have ten children, and a rich man may have only one child, yet the ten children of the poor man have the same right to the benefits of the public school as the only child of the rich man. A poor man is free to go to a public library and use the books in common with others that might have contributed much towards that library. And so it is with all communistic societies. With time and progress these communistic institutions will increase ever more, until all social institutions will become communistic. The inherent tendency of the mode of production to become communistic will determine that the mode of distribution shall also become communistic. When the modes of production and distribution will become communistic, communistic society will inevitably be established. Then mankind will emancipate themselves from the sway of the material world and the enslavement of the mode of production. Only then will a human society come into existence. The law of equivalents will then assume the form of the law: from every one according to his ability unto every one according to his needs. Thus we see that the full realization of communism is inevitable. Communism is not a state of society to be established, for it always was the basis of society and all human progress; but communism is only to be realized in its full extent, and this is inevitable. Thus we see that, what appeared to be impossible of proof, turns out to be impossible to disprove. And what is true of communism is equally true of the human society for they are only two aspects of the same process of history.

11. What is the human society? The human society is a society of human beings. What is a human being? A human being is neither an animal, nor a plant, nor an inanimate object. What distinguishes a human being from an inanimate object? It is active life. In the inanimate object life is passive, dormant. All realities in existence are animate, that is, have life; for life, as Spinoza tells us, is the power by which a reality perseveres in its existence, and all realities possess this power. But, while in the inanimate object that power is passive, in man that power is active. What distinguishes man from the plant? It is voluntary motion. The plant cannot voluntarily move, while a man can move voluntarily. What distinguishes man from the animal? It is reason. The animal feels, thinks and judges; but the animal cannot reason, because reason in the animal is implicit, dormant; but man can reason, because reason in man is explicit and awake. Man is a trinity: he is a plant, an animal and a human being. As a plant, he merely vegetates and performs the functions of a plant: assimilation of food and reproduction. As an animal, man moves about the world. But only as a human being does he reason and act in accordance with the light and guidance of reason. Hence, when we speak of a human being we mean only that function of man that is conceived in reason and follows the dictates of reason; all else that man does is not the act of a human being; it is the act of the animal or the plant in him. From this follows that a human society is a society the members of which have attained to explicit reason and who, in their social functions and relations, act in accordance with reason.

12. Reason differs fundamentally from the lower faculties, which even the animal possesses, namely, the senses, the understanding, judgment and an incipient intuition. These faculties live, move and have their being in the phenomenal material world. For this reason the animal entirely belongs to this phenomenal material world. And for this reason, also, the animal is entirely determined by the phenomenal material world. But reason differs from these faculties. Reason is transcendental, universal and architectonic. Being transcendental it raises man above the phenomenal material world, and reveals to him an infinite world that infinitely transcends the material world. By this reason makes man to become the master over the material world. Being universal, reason coordinates all human functions and all social functions; it brings out an integration of all human activities. When reason has become wholly explicit in mankind, then all human activities and relations will be coordinated into one universal system. Finally, reason is architectonic. Like the architect that plans beforehand the building that is to be constructed, so reason plans beforehand what man should do. When reason has become wholly explicit in mankind, they will all plan beforehand all their functions and relations. Like communism, the human society is the foundation of society, the basis of all human progress, the hope of the working class, and the destiny of mankind. Communism is only the material foundation of the human society. To the extent that communism has already realized itself, to that extent also the human society has realized itself. All religion, philosophy, science, art, industry and commerce were the products of reason and are used by men because they have reason. If all human achievements were to fall into the hands of animals, the latter could not use the former, because the latter have no reason. To the extent that reason has be-

come explicit in mankind to that extent has the human society been established. And as it is the destiny of mankind to attain to explicit reason, it follows that the human society is inevitable.

13. Here, again, we come to the term, inevitable; and a few words must be said about it. The inevitability of the human society arises from the fact that mankind are destined to attain to explicit reason. The earth and the human race may be destroyed before mankind will attain to explicit reason; but, if the earth and the human race are not destroyed, then it is inevitable that mankind will attain to reason, because that is their destiny. What is to be understood by destiny? I take an acorn in my hand. Implicit in the acorn is its destiny to become an oak tree. Now, the acorn may be destroyed, and its destiny will not be realized. But, if I put the acorn into the ground, then it is inevitable that it should become an oak tree. It will become an oak tree, and nothing else. This is true of all realities in existence. Once a human race was brought out, and it is inevitable that mankind should attain to reason, for it is reason that is the essence of man. Hence it is inevitable that mankind should attain to explicit reason; and explicit reason means the human society resting on universal communism. Here, again, we see that what at first seemed impossible of proof, turns out to be impossible to disprove. Hence, the conclusion that communism and the human society are inevitable is no longer an inference or an idea resting on faith, but is already an existing reality the negation of which is, not only impossible, but also inconceivable.

14. Thus we learned the following. First, there never were failures: life and history know of no failures. Since there were no failures in the past, there will be no failures in the future so long as life and history will function through the human race. Secondly, communism and the human society are inevitable, because they always existed and always were the basis of human existence; and, just as mankind will inevitably develop and attain to explicit reason, so communism and the human society will inevitably develop and attain to their fullest development. Finally, in identifying ourselves with the endeavor to realize the full development of communism and the human society, we also realize our own individual destiny. As Marx said: by changing and improving the external world, man also changes and improves his own nature. It is therefore in our own individual interests to work for communism and the human society. Spinoza tells us: No one endeavors to preserve his own being for the sake of another object. Again, Spinoza tells us: self-preservation is the first commandment of reason and is the highest virtue, from which all other virtues flow. In endeavoring to realize communism and the human society to their fullest extent, we are actually endeavoring to realize our own destiny, and thus to attain to a rational and happy existence. Hence, not he sacrifices anything of himself who works for communism and the human society, but he sacrifices himself who refuses to work for communism and the human society. Happy, indeed, is one who has already attained to some degree of reason and endeavors to attain to the full explicitness of his own reason and the realization of reason is human existence.